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WASHINGTON---The league-leading Newark Eagles and the runner-up New York Cubans maintained their neck-and-neck pace for the second half Negro National League pennant; this week, each team winning three straight games without a defeat as the torrid battle moved into its final stage with the league slated to close on Sept. 15.

The Eagles, first half victors, trounced the Black Yankees, 15-1, last Monday; whitewashed the Baltimore Elite Giants, 2-0, Thursday, behind brilliant two-hit pitching by Leon Day, then scored a 3-2 triumph over the Yankees Sunday at Yankee Stadium, as Lenny Pearson banged a eighth inning home run into the leftfield stands to score Pat Patterson, who doubled, for the tying and winning runs.

In a fourth game, at Baltimore, Friday night, the Birds and Elites battled to a 2-2 11-inning tie, with Max Manning and Joe Black going the route.

Hurls 5-Hitter

The Cubans, paced by the five-hit performance of Bill Tiant, defeated the Elites, 6-1, at Baltimore Tuesday night; clipped the Yankees, 10-7, Friday night, in New York, then nosed out the Philadelphia Stars, 6-5, Sunday, also in New York. The three wins kept the Latins still a threat to the Eagles, but trailing by two full games.

Baltimore, loser to the Birds and Cubans, roared back on Sunday to take a doubleheader from the Homestead Grays, 3-2 and 5-3, and keep ahead of the Philadelphia Stars, ~~xxxxxxx~~ for third place honors. The Stars, defeated by the Cubans, in a Sabbath thriller, earlier twice spanked the Grays to stay in fourth place.

The Grays' complete reversal of last year's form shunted them into the cellar spot for the first time in nine years with the Yankees holding a one-game edge over them for fifth position.

Day in Form

Day beat Bill Barnes to fashion his shutout Tuesday night and had a one-hitter until the eighth. On Sunday, Rufus Lewis scored for the Eagles, allowing only seven hits while his mates nicked Neck Stanley for a dozen. Three errors hurt the Yankees but it was Patterson's and Pearson's hitting in the eighth which wrecked a 2-1 Yankee lead and won for the Birds.

In the Cuban-Philadelphia game on the same bill, Walter Dennis banged a four-run homer in the first inning and doubled in the second to ~~xxxxx~~ drive in all of the Stars' runs, but the Cubans matched this with two in the first, three in the second to knot the count, then Linares doubled after Garcia walked in the fifth to push over the winning tally.

Henry McHenry and Barney Brown limited the Grays to six scattered hits in Friday night's contest, but three errors hurt the Grays, who outhit the Stars, 9-6. Frank Thompson and Gene Smith shared hurling duties for the Grays. The second contest, in which the Cubans beat the Yankees, 10-7, was a free hitting battle with each team using a trio of pitchers.